

Employee Reactions Different in the Type of Places - An Aspect of Work Places -

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Abstract—This study focuses on the difference of employee reactions differing from the types of work places. What kind of difference will employees show according to two types of places which have different characteristics. To answer this question, I will explore theoretical background of place, particularly introducing the most distinct characteristics. Then I will explain the difference of reactions of employees so that I suggest the importance of place. The first type of work place is a bank and the second type is a funeral home, where I studied the difference of employee reactions. The result confirms that the exhaustion and impersonalization of employees appear much higher in the funeral home than in the bank. This suggests a new phenomenon that there is a difference in the employee reaction depending on places.

Keywords—Burnout; Depersonalization; Emotional Burnout; Emotion Labor; Work Places.

Abbreviations—Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI).

I. INTRODUCTION

WHAT is the power of place? Discussion on the place has evolved into an issue about how the consciousness and behaviors of people living in a certain place and society is formed and regulated through the interaction of the place and the society. This study will inspect the power of places and look into the relations with the exhaustion and impersonalization. Model houses of a luxurious residential complex are showing how comfortable and grand people can live in their houses. Besides, they are marketing how an individual can communicate via multi media combined with electronic technology and how independently one can live a life. Although this sort of housing, however, has brought an attention and focus to a personal life, it has become a critical reason for disconnection between neighbors and forfeiture of questions about who are each other. Therefore, now it is time to share our life and communication with others by using the medium of place. It is the most fundamental environment which provides its residents with the sense of belonging, where the need for spatial consideration arises. In other words, there should be a consideration of spatial intersection where people meet each other unintentionally and naturally within their daily life. This needs to be on the way of coming back home after parking, taking a walk, or going shopping. In addition to this,

people need the spatial consideration to get together. Indoor or outdoor place for people to gather is needed. Hereof place is a real conception. For our daily schedule, we start a day in the place of house, spend more than a half of a day in the workplace, and finish up a day back home. Of these two places, home and workplace, workplace gives us more various experiences. Home relatively stands for relaxation, recharge, and comfort. In contrast, workplace reminds us of dynamic meanings such as passion, fierceness, or tragic. In workplace we need absorption and concentration like in a battlefield where we fight for death risking everything. What sort of difference is in the attitude and behaviors of employees depending on the type of workplace? This study cast this question. That is, I try to make a significant discovery by investigating the difference in the attitude and behaviors of employees depending on the type of workplace.

II. BACKGROUND

2.1. Workplaces

This study divides workplaces into two representative types: one is a bank, the other is a funeral home. The biggest difference between two is the attitude of employees when they facing customers. Bankers always greet and wait on customers with kindness, employees of a funeral home mostly take a grieving, sympathizing, and mourning actions

to customers. Consequently one can wonder how different the employee reaction in the two places is. Taking for an example, a bank where bankers carry out their duty has a clear instructions telling employees to deal with their customers in a kind attitude. Newly-hired employees are educated with this specified and codified instructions from the training session, which is the very start of their career as a banker, and these instructions say they have to help customers always in a kind attitude. They try to give their customers a good impression by tossing a bright smile and ready-made greetings when starting facing customers. They have mandatory overwork besides banking services, such as congratulating customer's happy events and saying a word of comfort for customer's bad day. Bankers are under a situation where they have to a lot of visitors everyday following the feeling originating from the place itself with no regard to their own condition. In a study on nurses and police officers, Bechtoldt found that police officers who work in the place where people should express relatively negative emotions show more negative emotions for their job [Bechtoldt et al., 2]. Korean funeral culture is featured by the way of expressing negative feeling, which appeals sympathy, letting out a wail [Joon Mann Kang, 6]. Korean funeral home is a place for separating living ones from the dead through the medium of death and funeral is a process of dealing with and managing the body done by living ones, which makes the relation between a funeral home, death, and the body indivisible [Park, 14]. In other words, Korean funeral has a lament, sad, and solemn atmosphere with the sorrow of one who leaves and ones who let her leave.

2.2. Emotion Labor

Hochschild's [5] emotional labor provided a historic turning point to the study of labor which had dealt with physical and mental labors. She describes that emotions of individuals control their own behaviors to be fit to the norms of their job or organization. She defines the emotional labor is "to manage one's emotion to act her facial or body expressions" in her famous book, *The Managed Heart*. During her observation of the training sessions that flight attendants of Delta Airline participated, she actually found both internal and surface acting and she caught the effort of employees that they tried not to let their passengers notice their negative feelings. The core premise of emotional labor is that employees must adhere to display rules that specify which emotions should be expressed on the job [Ashforth & Humphrey, 1; Morris & Feldman, 8; Rafaeli & Sutton, 10; 11; Sutton, 12; Sutton & Rafaeli, 13]. It can be read like this: the practice of emotional labor can be divided into two; one is the deep acting, with which employees themselves made their feelings harmonized to the expression rules of their organization, and the other is surface acting, which is not suitable with the expression rules of the organization but they made themselves look polite to customers with.

2.3. Burnout

The dependent variable in this study is burnout (emotional burnout, depersonalization). In recent environment of management and labor, it is barely possible to address its seriousness without telling this variable. The first researcher who used the term 'burnout' in a relation with work is Freudenberg [4]. He worked in a clinic and found workers start to lose their motivation with no particular reason to be cold to patients in the end. He explained such a phenomenon that people are exhausted from their duty by using a new term, burnout, which refers to a condition one suffers from doubts and frustration due to the insufficiency of desired accomplishments or rewards in spite of dedication to work. The most renowned study on burnout was conducted by Maslach & Jackson [7]. They conceptualized burnout as a 3 dimensional phenomenon including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and decline of self-esteem, which can happen to individuals who offer a interpersonal service on the point of contact. They developed a tool named Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), which has helped lots of following studies measure the burnout phenomenon in human behaviors since then. Pines & Aronson [9] defined that burnout is a condition of physiological, emotional and mental exhaustion which arises after a long-term exposure to a situation that is a heavy burden to one's emotion, not only limited in service workers. This does not happen in one minute but gradually develops. Generally people experience burnout when negative outcomes keep occurring or a negative situation lasts. Moreover, if employees should put too much energy into their duty, they get mentally and physically tired, their interest in others or their job is lowered, and therefore they find their self-esteem drop [Young-Joe Kim & Juhee Han, 15]. Employees in the burnout process may experience various symptoms including physical and mental changes: mentally, feeling failed, guilty, isolated and despondent; physically, having fatigue, frequent colds, headache, insomnia, and decrease of concentration [Cherniss, 3].

2.4. Research Model & Hypothesis

This study investigates differences of burnout depending on the types of workplace (Figure 1). For this, a bank and a funeral home stands for the types of workplaces. Bechtoldt et al., [2] found that police officers who work in the place where people should express relatively negative emotions show more negative emotions for their job.

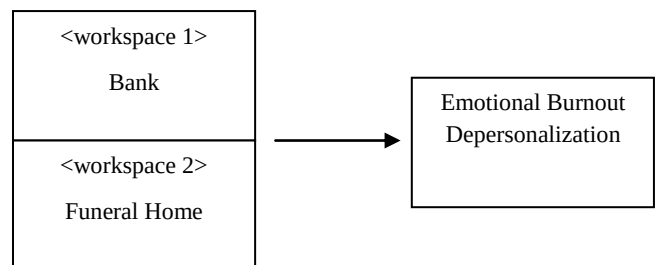


Figure 1: Research Model

It is assumed that employees who work in a place where people need to express negative emotions more feel higher level of burnout. Thus, those hypotheses can be drawn:

Hypothesis 1. Employees who works in the funeral home place may have more intensive emotional burnout than those in the bank place have.

Hypothesis 2. Employees who works in the funeral home place may have more intensive depersonalization than those in the bank place have.

III. RESULT

3.1. Sample

Samples used in this study were selected among the employees of banks and funeral homes in Daegu, Gyeongbuk, Daejeon, Gyeongnam, Busan. 192 truthfully answered questionnaires were analysed. Respondents included 50.0%(n=96) of males and 50.0%(n=96) of females, and 33.3%(n=64) of twenties, 32.8%(n=63) of thirties, 19.8%(n=38) of forties, and 14.1%(n=27) of fifties and above. Educational background ranged from high school graduated (22.9%, n=44), collage graduated (26.0%, n=50), university graduated (44.8%, n=86), to graduate school and above (6.3%, n=12). 47.9%(n=92) was not married and 52.1%(n=100) was. Job positions were staff (71.9%, n=138), assistant managers (16.1%, n=31), managers (7.3%, n=14), and general managers (4.7%, n=9). The length of service were shorter than five years (51.0%, n=98), five to ten (27.6%, n=53), ten to fifteen (8.9%, n=17), fifteen to twenty (5.7%, n=11) and twenty and longer (6.8%, n=13). Lastly, full-time employees were 56.8%(n=109) and temporary workers were 43.2%(n=83).

3.2. Hypothesis Test Result

I conducted T-test to verify the hypotheses above. Of the total 192 samples, bank place group is 57.3%(n=110), funeral home place group is 42.7%(n=82). (Table 1) T-test on each type shows specific difference about how emotional labor of employees in the bank place and funeral home place influences their emotional burnout and depersonalization. Average emotional burnout in the bank place is 2.2345 and average emotional burnout in the funeral home place is 2.6171. Significance level is .000, which means those are significant, verifying that emotional burnout of employees in the funeral home place is higher. For depersonalization, average depersonalization in the bank place is 2.2436 and average depersonalization in the funeral home is 2.5634. Significance level is .002, which means significant, verifying that depersonalization of employees in the funeral home place is higher. Conclusion is below.

Table 1: T-Test

	Average		Standard Deviation		t	p
	Bank	Funeral Home	Bank	Funeral Home		
Emotional Burnout	2.2345	2.6171	.73039	.59645	-3.875	.000
Depersonalization	2.2436	2.5634	.74063	.64416	-3.126	.002

Hypothesis 1. Employees who works in the funeral home place may have more intensive emotional burnout than those in the bank place have. - Suppose

Hypothesis 2. Employees who works in the funeral home place may have more intensive depersonalization than those in the bank place have. - Suppose

IV. CONCLUSION

This study intended to look into the difference on employee reactions depending on the types of workplace and examined the level of the dependent variable, burnout, verifying the difference between the groups by using T-test. The result is as follows. To verify the influence on the dependent variable depending on the types of workplace, two groups of workers from bank places and funeral home places represented each type and results showed higher emotional burnout and depersonalization of employees in the funeral home place which is a negative place with sadness, lamentation and silence. From this, it can be said that there is a difference in the employee reaction in the different types of places. Accordingly, this study concludes those suggestions. First, the level of dependent variables is different depending on the types of place. Precedent studies on emotional labor have not examined this phenomenon, which indicates the importance of types of place. Second, this is a comparative study on employ reactions depending on the types of place. This method has not been conducted in precedent studies so that this research offers a new direction of place in the research methodology on emotional labor. Third, there was some important findings around the place of funeral home. Employees in the funeral home place have a high level of emotional burnout and depersonalization. What kind of solutions can be devised on this issue of emotional labor of employees in such organizations? The most important thing is that there should be various feedback activities in consideration of psychological aspects of employees'. Besides of simply raising salaries, companies need to prepare opportunities that could give a good stimulation to psychological aspects of employees', such as cultural events. In addition, companies can organize a regular program like a communication stage of employees with counsellors who have professional knowledge.

In spite of various suggestions above, this study involves those limitations. First, total 192 samples are not enough to be standardized. This could be more objective with bigger sample. Second, although simple comparison of T-test indicates significant results comparing the representative types of place, more specific types of place were not suggested. Following research should include a wider range of place types.

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